

AMENDMENTS THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

means for uniformly charging the surface of said photoconductive element;

means for exposing the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said

means for uniformly charging to thereby form a latent image;

a developing unit configured to develop the latent image with toner, the development unit comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

means for transferring the toner image from said photoconductive element to a subject body;

means for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein an image forming module accommodates said photoconductive element and said means for dehumidifying is disposed in the image forming module.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein dehumidified air output from said means for dehumidifying is sent into the image forming module, said means for uniformly charging and said developing unit and removably mounted to a casing of said apparatus.

Claim 3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for uniformly charging comprises a contact type charger.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for dehumidifying controls air temperature while dehumidifying air.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the toner stored in said developing unit is produced by polymerization.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of photoconductive elements each being provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a plurality of means each for uniformly charging the surface of one of said plurality of photoconductive elements;

at least one means for exposing the surface of each of said plurality of photoconductive elements charged by one of said plurality of means for uniformly charging to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing units each configured to develop a latent image with toner of a particular color, each of the plurality of developing units comprising a developing roller configured to feed said toner of the particular color to one of said plurality of

photoconductive elements to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on the one of said plurality of photoconductive elements;

a plurality of means each for transferring the toner image from one of said plurality of photoconductive elements to a subject body;

means for sending air to spaces around said plurality of photoconductive elements;
and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein a plurality of image forming modules each accommodates one of said plurality of photoconductive elements and said means for dehumidifying is disposed in each of said image forming modules.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein dehumidified air output from said means for sending is sent into said plurality of image forming modules, one of said plurality of means for uniformly charging and one of said plurality of developing units and removably mounted to a casing of said apparatus.

Claim 9 (Cancelled).

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein each of said plurality of means for uniformly charging comprises a contact type charger.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said means for dehumidifying controls air temperature while dehumidifying air.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein the toner stored in each of said plurality of developing units is produced by polymerization.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

~~one~~ a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

means for uniformly charging the surface of said photoconductive element;

means for exposing the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said

means for uniformly charging to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing units arranged around said photoconductive element, each developing unit being configured to store toner of a particular color and to develop the latent image with said toner, and each developing unit comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

means for sequentially transferring toner images sequentially formed on said photoconductive element to a subject body one above the other;

means for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein an image forming module accommodates said photoconductive element and said means for dehumidifying is disposed in the image forming module.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein dehumidified air output from said means for sending is sent into said image forming module,

said means for uniformly charging and said plurality of developing units and removably mounted to a casing of said apparatus.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said means for uniformly charging comprises a contact type charger.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said means for dehumidifying controls air temperature while dehumidifying air.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the toner stored in each of said plurality of developing unit is produced by polymerization.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a charger configured to uniformly charge the surface of said photoconductive element;

an exposing unit configured to expose the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said charger to thereby form a latent image;

a developing device configured to develop the latent image with toner, the developing device comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive

element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

an image transferring device configured to transfer the toner image from said photoconductive element to a subject body;

an air sending device for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element;
and

an air conditioning device for dehumidifying air to be sent by said air sending device;
wherein an image forming module accommodates said photoconductive element and said air conditioning device is disposed in the image forming module.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of photoconductive elements each being provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a plurality of chargers each being configured to uniformly charge the surface of one of said plurality of photoconductive elements;

at least one exposing unit configured to expose the surface of each of said plurality of photoconductive elements charged by one of said plurality of chargers to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing devices each being configured to develop a latent image formed on one of said plurality of photoconductive elements with toner of a particular color, each of the plurality of developing devices comprising a developing roller configured to feed the toner of the particular color to respective one of the plurality of photoconductive elements to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on the respective one of the plurality of photoconductive elements;

a plurality of image transferring devices each being configured to transfer the toner image from one of said plurality of photoconductive elements to a subject body;

an air sending device configured to send air to spaces around said plurality of photoconductive elements; and

an air conditioning device configured to dehumidify air to be sent by said air sending device;

wherein a plurality of image forming modules each accommodates one of said plurality of photoconductive elements and said air conditioning device is disposed in the plurality of image forming modules.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a charger configured to uniformly charge the surface of said photoconductive element;

an exposing unit configured to expose the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said charger to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing devices arranged around said photoconductive element and each being configured to store toner of a particular color for developing the latent image with said toner, each developing device comprising a developing roller configured to feed the toner to the photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

an image transferring device configured to sequentially transfer toner images sequentially formed on said photoconductive element to a subject body one above the other;

an air sending device configured to send air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

an air conditioning device configured to dehumidify air to be sent by said air sending device;

wherein an image forming module accommodates the photoconductive element and said air conditioning device is disposed in the image forming module.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

means for uniformly charging the surface of said photoconductive element;

means for exposing the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said

means for uniformly charging to thereby form a latent image;

a developing unit configured to develop the latent image with toner, the development unit comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

means for transferring the toner image from said photoconductive element to a subject body;

means for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus body; the image forming module includes the photoconductive element, ~~charger~~ the means

for uniformly charging the surface and the developing unit; and the means for dehumidifying
air ~~air conditioning means~~ sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus
comprising:

a plurality of photoconductive elements each being provided with a photoconductive
layer on a surface thereof;

a plurality of means each for uniformly charging the surface of one of said plurality of
photoconductive elements;

at least one means for exposing the surface of each of said plurality of
photoconductive elements charged by one of said plurality of means for uniformly charging
to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing units each configured to develop a latent image with toner of
a particular color, each of the plurality of developing units comprising a developing roller
configured to feed said toner of the particular color to one of said plurality of
photoconductive elements to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect
residual toner left on the one of said plurality of photoconductive elements;

a plurality of means each for transferring the toner image from one of said plurality of
photoconductive elements to a subject body;

means for sending air to spaces around said plurality of photoconductive elements;
and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus
body; the image forming module includes at least one of the photoconductive elements
element, at least one of the means each for uniformly charging the surface ~~charger~~ and at

least one of the developing units ~~unit~~; and the means for dehumidifying air conditioning
~~means~~ sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

~~one a~~ photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

means for uniformly charging the surface of said photoconductive element;

means for exposing the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said

means for uniformly charging to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing units arranged around said photoconductive element, each developing unit being configured to store toner of a particular color and to develop the latent image with said toner, and each developing unit comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

means for sequentially transferring toner images sequentially formed on said photoconductive element to a subject body one above the other;

means for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

means for dehumidifying air to be sent by said means for sending;

wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus body; the image forming module includes the photoconductive element, the means for uniformly charging the surface ~~charger~~ and at least one of the developing units ~~developing unit~~; and the means for dehumidifying air conditioning ~~means~~ sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module,

wherein air sent into an image forming module is discharged to an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a charger configured to uniformly charge the surface of said photoconductive element;

an exposing unit configured to expose the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said charger to thereby form a latent image;

a developing device configured to develop the latent image with toner, the developing device comprising a development roller configured to feed said toner to said photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

an image transferring device configured to transfer the toner image from said photoconductive element to a subject body;

an air sending device for sending air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

an air conditioning device for dehumidifying air to be sent by said air sending device; wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus body; the image forming module includes the photoconductive element, charger and developing ~~device unit~~; and the air conditioning ~~device means~~ sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of photoconductive elements each being provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a plurality of chargers each being configured to uniformly charge the surface of one of said plurality of photoconductive elements;

at least one exposing unit configured to expose the surface of each of said plurality of photoconductive elements charged by one of said plurality of chargers to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing devices each being configured to develop a latent image formed on one of said plurality of photoconductive elements with toner of a particular color, each of the plurality of developing devices comprising a developing roller configured to feed the toner of the particular color to respective one of the plurality of photoconductive elements to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on the respective one of the plurality of photoconductive elements;

a plurality of image transferring devices each being configured to transfer the toner image from one of said plurality of photoconductive elements to a subject body;

an air sending device configured to send air to spaces around said plurality of photoconductive elements; and

an air conditioning device configured to dehumidify air to be sent by said air sending device;

wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus body; the image forming module includes at least one of the photoconductive elements ~~element~~, at least one of the chargers ~~charger~~ and at least one of the developing devices

~~developing unit~~; and the air conditioning device means sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): An electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising:

a photoconductive element provided with a photoconductive layer on a surface thereof;

a charger configured to uniformly charge the surface of said photoconductive element;

an exposing unit configured to expose the surface of said photoconductive element charged by said charger to thereby form a latent image;

a plurality of developing devices arranged around said photoconductive element and each being configured to store toner of a particular color for developing the latent image with said toner, each developing device comprising a developing roller configured to feed the toner to the photoconductive element to thereby produce a corresponding toner image and to collect residual toner left on said photoconductive element;

an image transferring device configured to sequentially transfer toner images sequentially formed on said photoconductive element to a subject body one above the other;

an air sending device configured to send air to a space around said photoconductive element; and

an air conditioning device configured to dehumidify air to be sent by said air sending device;

wherein an image forming module is removably mounted to a casing of an apparatus body; the image forming module includes the photoconductive element, charger and at least

one developing device ~~developing unit~~; and the air conditioning device ~~means~~ sends dehumidified air into the ~~individual~~ image forming module;

wherein air sent into the image forming module is discharged to an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The electrophotographic image forming apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein

air sent into an image forming module is discharged to ~~the~~ an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module ~~easing~~.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The electrophotographic image forming apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein

air sent into an image forming module is discharged to ~~the~~ an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module ~~easing~~.

Claim 30 (Cancelled).

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The electrophotographic image forming apparatus according to Claim 25, wherein

air sent into an image forming module is discharged to ~~the~~ an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module ~~easing~~.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): The electrophotographic image forming apparatus according to Claim 26, wherein

air sent into an image forming module is discharged to ~~the~~ an outside of the image forming module only via an image transfer opening through which a part of the photoconductive element is exposed to the outside of the image forming module ~~easing~~.

Claim 33 (Cancelled).